

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (New): A coating and developing system comprising:
a coating unit for coating a surface of a substrate with a resist,
a developing unit for processing the substrate by a developing process after exposing the substrate coated with a transparent liquid layer, and
a first cleaning means for cleaning the surface of the substrate coated with the resist to remove components of the resist that may dissolve in the liquid layer when the surface of the substrate coated with the resist comes into contact with the liquid layer with a cleaning liquid before exposure.

Claim 19 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 18, wherein the coating unit comprises:
a substrate holding device capable of holding the substrate in a horizontal position and of rotating the substrate about a vertical axis,
a resist pouring nozzle for pouring the resist onto the surface of the substrate held by the substrate holding device.

Claim 20 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 18, wherein the first cleaning means comprises:
a closely closable vessel capable of holding the substrate therein,
a substrate support device disposed in the closely closable vessel and capable of holding the substrate in a horizontal position thereon,

a cleaning liquid supply means for supplying a cleaning liquid into the closely closable vessel, and

a cleaning liquid discharging means for discharging the cleaning liquid.

Claim 21 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 20, further comprising a heating unit for heating the surface of the substrate coated with the resist, wherein the first cleaning means is adjacent to the heating unit.

Claim 22 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 20, further comprising a drying means for drying the substrate by flowing a dry gas through the closely closable vessel after the cleaning liquid has been discharged from the closely closable vessel.

Claim 23 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 18, wherein the first cleaning means comprises:

a substrate holding device for holding the substrate in a horizontal position,

a cleaning nozzle provided with pouring openings arranged along the width of the substrate to pour the cleaning liquid onto the surface of the substrate held by the substrate holding device, and suction openings arranged adjacently to the pouring openings on the front and/or the back side of the pouring openings to suck up the cleaning liquid from the surface of the substrate, and

a cleaning nozzle moving means for horizontally moving the cleaning nozzle relative to the substrate holding device.

Claim 24 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 18, wherein the first cleaning means is provided with a drying means for removing the cleaning liquid remaining on the substrate to dry the substrate.

Claim 25 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 18, further comprising an interface unit for transferring the substrate coated with the resist to an exposure system and receiving the exposed substrate from the exposure system, wherein the first cleaning means is included in the interface unit.

Claim 26 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 18, further comprising a second cleaning means for cleaning the surface of the exposed substrate with a cleaning liquid before subjecting the substrate to a developing process.

Claim 27 (New): The coating and developing system according to claim 26, wherein the first cleaning means serves also as the second cleaning means.

Claim 28 (New): A coating and developing method comprising:
a coating process for coating a surface of a substrate with a resist,
a first cleaning process for cleaning the surface of the substrate coated with the resist to remove components of the resist that may dissolve in the liquid layer when the surface of the substrate coated with the resist comes into contact with the liquid layer with a cleaning liquid before exposure,
an exposure process for exposing the surface of the substrate coated with a transparent liquid layer, and
a developing process for developing the exposed surface of the substrate.

Claim 29 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 28, wherein the coating process includes the step of supplying the resist onto the surface of the substrate held in a horizontal position by a substrate holding device, and the first cleaning process includes the step of pouring a cleaning liquid through a cleaning nozzle onto the surface of the substrate held by the substrate holding device.

Claim 30 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 28, wherein the first cleaning process includes the steps of; carrying the substrate into a closely closable vessel and holding the substrate in a horizontal position, cleaning a surface of the substrate by supplying a cleaning liquid into the closely closable vessel, and discharging the cleaning liquid.

Claim 31 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 30, further comprising the step of drying the substrate by flowing a drying gas through the closely closable vessel after discharging the cleaning liquid from the closely closable vessel.

Claim 32 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 28, wherein the first cleaning process moves horizontally a cleaning nozzle provided with pouring openings through which a cleaning liquid is poured onto the surface of the substrate and sucks the cleaning liquid poured onto the substrate through suction openings arranged adjacently to the pouring openings on the front and/or the back side of the discharge openings.

Claim 33 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 28, further comprising a drying process for drying the substrate after the first cleaning process and before the exposure process.

Claim 34 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 28, further comprising a cleaning process for cleaning the surface of the exposed substrate with a cleaning liquid before the developing process.

Claim 35 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 28, further comprising a heating process for heating the substrate after the first cleaning process before subjecting the substrate to the exposure process.

Claim 36 (New): The coating and developing method according to claim 35, further comprising a drying process for drying the substrate after the first cleaning process before subjecting the substrate to the heating process.